

TOK AREA VISITOR CENTER SITE EVALUATION January 2002

Site Evaluation Criteria		Potential Site Locations - General Areas In or Near Tok											
		East of Tok on Alaska Highway		East "Edge" of Tok on Alaska Highway (1-2 miles from Tok Junction)		Center of Tok on/ near Alaska Highway			Tok Cut-Off, near the Alaska Highway			West of Tok Junction on Alaska Highway	
A	SITE ACREAGE ADEQUATE FOR PROJECT												
A1	For APLIC only (~2 acres)	Yes		Yes		Yes			Yes			Yes	
A2	For combined or adjacent APLIC and FWS facility (~7 acres)	Yes		Yes		Yes			Yes			Yes	
A3	For combined APLIC/FWS facility, with outdoor education and interpretation (~8 acres needed)	Yes		Yes		Yes — some sites			Yes			Yes	
B	ACCESSIBILITY & CONVENIENCE FOR VISITORS												
B1	On route of highway travelers through Tok	All travelers		All travelers		All travelers			Not enroute for Fairbanks-bound travelers			Not enroute for Anchorage-bound travelers	
B2	Visibility from Alaska Highway	Less visible due to vegetation and topography — signage important		Highly visible		Highly visible if Alaska Hwy. frontage			Not visible from Alaska Highway — signage important for Fairbanks-bound travelers			Highly visible — but signage important for Anchorage-bound travelers	
B3	Convenience for walking or "short stop" visitation (within one-half (1/2) mile radius of Junction)	Not walking distance — less convenient for "short stop" visitors		Not within 1/2 mile of Junction, but on pedestrian path		Sites within 1/2 mile of Junction. Very convenient for pedestrians and "short stop" visitors; on pedestrian path.			Sites within 1/2 mile of Junction. Convenient for pedestrians & "short stop" visitors; on pedestrian path			Potential to access via walking, depending on site selected	
B4	Convenience to other visitor information & services	Minimal		Moderate		Maximum — greatest potential for coordination with Main Street Visitor Center			Moderate			Moderate	
C	SITE AESTHETICS AND INTERPRETATION												
C1	Opportunity to create grander "Gateway to Alaska," stand-alone visitor facility	Maximum		Moderate		Minimal			Minimal			Moderate	
C2	Opportunity to create more natural setting or vegetated screening for facility	Maximum		Moderate		Minimal			Moderate			Moderate	
C3	Aesthetic views from site	Maximum — views of panoramic scenery; no incompatible views		Moderate		Minimal — potential for views of "incompatible" features (utility towers, etc.)			Minimal — potential for views of "incompatible" features			Moderate	
C4	Opportunities for outdoor interpretation of natural history and environment on-site	Maximum		Moderate		Minimal — area is more "built-up" than others			Minimal to Moderate			Moderate	
C5	Opportunities for interpretation of cultural features	Greater potential for collaboration with Native cultural center		Potential for collaboration with Native cultural center		Less potential for collaboration with Native cultural center			Less potential for collaboration with Native cultural center			Less potential for collaboration with Native cultural center	
D	LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES												
D1	Compatibility with existing and adjacent land use	Sites generally compatible; need to consider potential impact on residences at some locations		Compatible; need to consider location/ use of facility relative to dog mushing trail		Compatible			Compatible			Compatible	
D2	Compatibility with state, federal, corporate/tribal plans and regulations	No apparent conflicts		No apparent conflicts		No apparent conflicts. State land parcels in this area classified for this use; AMHT lands in this area planned for development. Limited next to AK Hwy			No apparent conflicts. AMHT lands in this area planned for development.			No apparent conflicts. AMHT lands in this area planned for development.	
D3	Potential to implement ANCSA Section 1306 re: facility siting on Native land	Yes		Yes					No			No	
E	COMMUNITY COLLABORATION												
E1	Prospects for shared community use (e.g., school use)	Less opportunity due to distance from Tok (7-10 miles)		Good location for shared community use		Good location for shared community use			Good location for shared community use; especially with Tok School			Good location for shared community use	
E2	Prospects for collaboration with other visitor uses or services	Potential collaboration with Native cultural center		Potential collaboration with Native cultural center		Greatest potential for collaboration with Main Street Visitor Center			Minimal			Minimal	
E3	Anticipated effect on private businesses	Visitors would stop at site East of Tok. May encourage independent travelers to stay longer or overnight in area. However, may also discourage a "second stop" at Tok businesses. May encourage business development on adjacent properties more distant (7-10 miles) from Tok.		Encourage visitation in Tok proper. May encourage/benefit business development on adjacent properties at east edge of Tok.		Encourage visitation in Tok proper. May encourage/benefit business development on adjacent properties.			Travelers to Anchorage may by-pass Tok visitor services in favor of stop at Visitor Center.			Travelers to Fairbanks may by-pass Tok visitor services in favor of stop at Visitor Center.	
F	ENVIRONMENTAL, UTILITIES & SECURITY												
F1	Wetlands/Drainage	Well-drained		Wetlands; not well-drained		Well-drained			Well-drained			Sites well-drained	
F2	Water, wastewater, electrical utilities	Would need to be developed on site		Would need to be developed on site		Would need to be developed on site			Would need to be developed on site			Would need to be developed on site	
F3	Traffic safety and access	OK		OK		More congested, potential for some conflicts with other enterprises.			OK			OK	
F4	Permits likely to be needed	On-site water and wastewater; driveway permit		COE 404/DEC 401 wetlands permit; on-site water and wastewater; driveway permit		On-site water and wastewater; driveway permit			On-site water and wastewater; driveway permit			On-site water and wastewater; driveway permit	
F5	Site security	May require on-site caretaker or monitoring		Proximity to town enhances security		Proximity to town enhances security			Proximity to town enhances security			Proximity to town enhances security	
F6	Other environmental considerations	Potential sites adjacent to Tok or Tanana Rivers; require drainage management		NA		NA			NA			NA	
G	AGENCY CONSIDERATIONS												
G1	Project cost considerations	FOR ALL AREAS: Project costs would be lowest if undeveloped, State land is used. Project costs would be higher if private (including Native-owned) land must be acquired and/or if existing development must be demolished.											
G2	Commute distance/time from Tok	7 - 10 mi. commute		No commute		No commute			No commute			No commute	
G3	Staff relocation from Tok	No		No		No			No			No	
		Site Examples		Site Examples		Site Examples		Site Examples		Site Examples		Site Example*	
H	SPECIFIC INFORMATION RE: SITE EXAMPLES	1 Tanana River hill, S. of Alaska Hwy.	2 Tok River, S. of Alaska Hwy.	3 East of Dog Musher's Hall— S. of Alaska Hwy.	4 Wayfarer's Hotel— N. of Alaska Hwy.	5 Adjacent to 40— Mile Air @ Airport	6 AMHT land at D Street & Alaska Hwy.	7 Fifth Street, N. of Alaska Hwy, toward River Rd.	8 East of APLIC on Alaska Hwy. (APLIC expansion or new building)	9 Log Community Building	10 Former Parker House Site	11 AMHT land adjacent to Tok School	12 AMHT land at C Street & Alaska Hwy
H1	Acreage	160 acres	27.6 acres	>25 acres	potential 12 acres, with agreement of adjacent owner	approx. 10 acres	20-25 acres	>25 acres	approx. 6 acres	7,500 sq. ft. facility	3.5 acres	>25 acres	12 acres
H2	Current landowner	Tetlin	Tanacross	Tanacross	private	private	AMHT	Tanacross	State of Alaska	State / TCUC	private	AMHT	AMHT
H3	Existing Land Use	Undeveloped	Undeveloped; nearby residence	Undeveloped	Motel	On Airport — existing hangar and vehicle garages	Undeveloped; adjacent to Airport	Undeveloped (partially burned in 1990)	Undeveloped (greenbelt)	Chamber/Visitor Center/Library	Undeveloped	Undeveloped; fairgrounds	Undeveloped
H4	Notes re: site availability, acquisition				Private sale; would require collaboration between two private landowners	Private sale; would require collaboration between two private landowners	Lease, not sale		State ownership	Would require agreement of TCUC	Private sale; single landowner	Lease, not sale Several months to parcelize prior to lease	Lease, not sale
H5	Notes re: site developability			Poorly drained site	Poorly drained site				Narrow parcel may be difficult for site layout				Constructed ROW would need to be vacated.
*Note: Additional, larger parcels may be available west of Tok Junction. If this general area is favored for the facility, additional sites would be identified and evaluated. Definitions: APLIC = Alaska Public Lands Information Center; AMHT = Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority; TCUC = Tok Community Umbrella Corporation													